

## Matsui Delivers Remarks at North Natomas Library Opening

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SACRAMENTO, CA – Today, Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui (D-Sacramento) joined local leaders for the grand opening and ribbon-cutting of the newly built North Natomas Library and delivered the following remarks, as prepared for delivery:

“As each New Year begins, we have an opportunity to reflect on our past, and to look to the future. The opening of this library can help us do both. We all know that recent budget cuts have hurt our schools and libraries. Library hours have been cut back, teachers have been laid off, and class sizes have increased. These cuts have not gone unnoticed, and the federal government is committed to strengthening our schools, and ensuring all children can have a quality education.

“The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act brought \$63 million into Sacramento schools, including over one million dollars to Natomas Unified School District, which is helping to limit some of the negative effects of the State and local budget crises. And the Jobs Package that we just passed boosts our commitment to hiring and retaining more teachers in Sacramento and across the country. And as we invest in our schools, we also need to invest in our libraries, which help foster life-long learning for people of all ages.

“The North Natomas Library will provide thousands of books and novels, newspapers and journals, for local residents to share and enjoy. The library includes a college and career counseling center, a computer lab which supports research and instruction, for the high school and community college, community meeting space, and special spaces for children, teens, and high school and college students. The Library Authority has done a remarkable job in making sure this library also has free high speed Internet connection available to the public, which is one of the critical roles that libraries play in our community.

“As a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, with jurisdiction over communication resources, I have been a strong advocate for broadband grants to be allocated to anchor institutions, like schools and libraries, and to “underserved” communities, so that more Americans have access to the Internet.

“I am also encouraging the Obama Administration to give greater consideration to libraries, during the second round of the broadband stimulus grant process, so that they can continue to provide free Internet access, for students, and to all members of the public. From the Friends of the North Natomas Library, to the Library Authority, to the City Council, to the Natomas Unified School District, and Los Rios Community College District, it has taken a village to build this library, and all of your efforts have paid off. And I would like to give a special thank you, to the City of Sacramento, and the Sacramento Public Library Authority, for all your help in making this day a reality.

“Based on input from North Natomas community members, planning for the new library began in 2000. The library is a joint-use project that embodies the true spirit of a collaborative community. Located adjacent to Inderkum High School, and the Natomas Center of American River College, the new facility provides library service to students of the high school, students of the college, and the growing North Natomas community. I know that the Natomas community will take enormous pride in this beautiful facility, and I hope we utilize all that it has to offer.”

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